



# Spark Gap

Vol. 35, Issue 6, June 2018 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for thirty-five years*

## **ON OUR MARC:**

I would like to thank all those that came out for the Strawberry Fest. We had about 17 members that came out to show support. Every one there seemed to be enjoying the day but with the bands and the weather, not sure how many stations we actually contacted. It was hot and muggy but we were still had fun until the weather turned bad. Well, we thought it was going to get bad. The wind came up and started to blow the top off the canopies and I saw a few lightning strikes to the north, so we closed down and packed everything up about 2 PM. Our day was cut short along with a few other vendors. Unfortunately, we closed down and the weather never hit us. That's Indiana weather for you.

Next on our agenda is Kids Day and Field Day. Kids Day June 16<sup>th</sup>, will be from 2pm to 5pm. It will be our first time trying this event so let's hope for a good turnout. Field Day will be on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>. We will start setting up about noon and be able to get on the air at 2pm. We will run for 24 hours as we have a few people that plan on working the night shift. Both event will be held down at our radio room.

July and Aug will be quite for us. After June, our next event isn't until Sept 9<sup>th</sup> which is Heartnut Fest. It will be one day only and Bruce will have more information for us in July or Aug.

This month's dinner social was held at Johnson BBQ in Bargersville. We had 17 people attend and we had a good time. A few people mentioned that they would like to go back in the cooler weather and sit out in the back on the patio. Unfortunately, they don't take reservations so we had a few people sitting at other tables until some of our people got up and left. Any suggestions for the month of July dinner social?

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those that have helped with the Greenwood Band Contest in the past years. If you weren't at the last meeting, the club voted not to work it. Bob LaGrange had mentioned that getting help on that day was getting harder and harder to get enough people together for the event without having people work the full shift without almost no breaks. Again, thank you. I'm sure Bob also appreciates your help.

See you Saturday. Coffee will be on.

*Jacki - K16QOG*

*President*

## 26<sup>th</sup> annual White River Township Fire Department Strawberry Festival

It was a dark and stormy night. Well, not exactly dark, but a little stormy and midday at the 26<sup>th</sup> annual White River Township Fire Department Strawberry Festival. For over two decades the Mid-State Amateur Radio club has set up camp at the festival to share information about Amateur radio with the public. During the Saturday June 9<sup>th</sup> event, hot and humid conditions gave way to threatening thunderstorms.

We were set up my 10am with three canopies', several tables, chairs and lots of HF and dual band radio equipment. Our mission was to meet and greet the public as they passed by looking for the famous strawberry shortcakes, hamburgers and other food items. And yes, the fire trucks too. Our day came to a frantic end around 1:30pm as storm clouds rolled in and word of tornado warnings for southern Marion county were broadcast. Everyone scrambled to pull down the canopies as wind gusts lifted them off the ground. Our grounding stakes were not holding against the winds. Steve-K9DY, Jack-W8ISH, Bruce-K9ICP and Ron-K9THR scrambled to cover their expensive radios and get the HF antennas secured before the rains came. Fortunately, the storm cells split and it didn't rain on our festival.

On the plus side we had over a dozen hams come to support the day long outing. Club President Jacki Frederick-KI6QOG was pleased with the turnout. Brian Smith-W9IND from the Indianapolis radio club paid us a visit and remarked at how much it looked like a Field Day set up. In the end, we didn't log any contest points, but did score major PR points with the public and the firefighters at White River Twp Fire Department.

***-w8ish***



***Jack W8ISH coax web***



***Bob KC9NJM with his coax***





*Bob, Ron & Noel talk radio*



*Bob & Steve Vintenna*



*Noel, N9MMN hunts for satellites*



*Ten-Tec station*



*Bruce at his station in action*



*Tent talk in the shade*

# Is the internet, millennials or FT-8 killing ham radio?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Amateur radio bloggers love to write about the demise of amateur radio. To wit, we have:

- K0NR's [Is the Internet destroying amateur radio?](http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2017/11/internet-destroying-amateur-radio/) (<http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2017/11/internet-destroying-amateur-radio/>)
- N0SSC's [Millennials are killing ham radio](http://n0ssc.com/posts/583-millennials-are-killing-ham-radio) (<http://n0ssc.com/posts/583-millennials-are-killing-ham-radio>)
- PE4BAS' [Is FT-8 damaging amateur radio?](https://pe4bas.blogspot.com/2018/04/is-ft8-damaging-hamradio.html) (<https://pe4bas.blogspot.com/2018/04/is-ft8-damaging-hamradio.html>)
- NZ0T's [Did Joe Taylor K1JT Destroy Amateur Radio?](http://www.ei5di.com/jt.html) (<http://www.ei5di.com/jt.html>)

Of course, none of these posts are really saying that the internet, millennials, or FT-8 has killed amateur radio. What they are saying is that all of these are changing amateur radio as we know it. Well, duh, the way we live our lives changes every day. Why should amateur radio be any different?

For example, Bob, K0NR, discusses how the operation of remote stations is changing the game of DX. Can you really claim that you worked a DX station if you rented time on a super station? [I've written about that topic, too](https://www.kb6nu.com/dx-advisory-committee-wants-to-put-the-screws-to-remote-operation/) (<https://www.kb6nu.com/dx-advisory-committee-wants-to-put-the-screws-to-remote-operation/>).

There has also been much written about how FT8 is changing the amateur radio game. [One blog post](https://ve7sl.blogspot.com/2017/10/160m-ft8-end-of-era.html) (<https://ve7sl.blogspot.com/2017/10/160m-ft8-end-of-era.html>), talking about the effect of FT8 on 160m operation, even goes so far to say that this is the “end of an era.” On DX World, the results of the poll, [“FT8 – Damaging to Amateur Radio?”](https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/) (<https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/>) show more than half of the respondents think that FT8 is damaging amateur radio.

I specifically used the word “game” in the previous two paragraphs because that’s exactly what’s changing. The physics of amateur radio certainly isn’t changing. Our transmitters are still generating electromagnetic waves like they have been for decades, and on the HF bands, anyway, those radio waves are bouncing off the ionosphere just as they have been for more than the past 100 years.

What’s changing is the human component. By that I mean what’s changing is how we think people should participate in the hobby. The hams that are complaining that the internet or millennials or FT8 is killing amateur radio are really just complaining that people aren’t participating in amateur radio the way they want them to participate.

Here’s where we talk about millennials. In his blog post, Sterling, N0SSC, suggests that setting up remote stations is one way to engage young people. He writes, “I believe that remote operating, and other internet-assisted means of ham radio operation, are critical to youth engagement.”

He’s also big on an idea he calls “ham radio hackathons.” He writes,

“A hackathon isn’t a coding competition. It’s explained well in [this Medium article](https://medium.com/hackathons-anonymous/wtf-is-a-hackathon-92668579601) (<https://medium.com/hackathons-anonymous/wtf-is-a-hackathon-92668579601>). It goes even further than that, not limited to coders and engineers, but open to thinkers, doers, philosophers, system engineers, math people, teachers, students, artists, stakeholders... anyone with an interest in **solving a problem with technology.**”

I support both of these ideas, but I think that millennials (and, to be fair, it isn’t just millennials we’re talking about here, but any newcomers to the hobby) need to step up and get these things going. I don’t think it’s my job to try to get kids interested in amateur radio. I don’t even know if that’s really possible. What I can do, however, is be there to encourage and support kids (and anyone else that



expresses a sincere interest in amateur radio).

For example, I'm not sure how fruitful it would be to set up my station to be remotely operable and then saying to some kids, "Hey, come and operate my station." What I think would be more fruitful is to say to a kid, "Hey, come help me set up my remote control station, so that we both can use it." Then, it turns into a learning situation, and we both gain from the exercise.

The same kind of thing has to happen with ham radio hackathons. The motivation has to come from the ground up, not the top down. I do hope that this idea gets off the ground, though, and I'm standing by, ready to support this effort however I can.

I think that millennials (I'm really getting tired of that term, by the way) need to grab the bull by the horns and take amateur radio in the direction they want it to go. Feel free to kill amateur radio as we know it. Make it better!

-----

When he's not trying to figure out how to save amateur radio, Dan builds stuff, blogs about amateur radio at [KB6NU.Com](http://KB6NU.Com), teaches amateur radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about what you think is killing amateur radio at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).





***Birthdays for the month of June:***

***WA9VBG - Sam Carter***  
***W8ISH - Jack Parker***  
***K9OMT - Michael Turner***  
***KB9RBB - Tom Achors***  
***KD9FPO - John Dickerson***  
***KM6CRL - Bill Jackson***

## **Scouts Working On Radio Merit Badge**

I am a scout leader with several titles locally and I am a radio merit badge counselor. I will be helping Troop 228 scouts here in Franklin work on the radio merit badge this fall. Additionally, I know some of them and possibly some of the adult leaders are interested in studying for their technician class license. I would greatly appreciate any members willing to help teach 8-10 scouts and adult leaders for a few week crash course for the technician license I would greatly appreciate hearing from them.

Feel free to email me at [thinbluebbq@gmail.com](mailto:thinbluebbq@gmail.com) or [committeechairpack226@gmail.com](mailto:committeechairpack226@gmail.com) or call 317-902-2407.

Brian Herbert  
K9BMH

## **Iranian Radars Showing Up on 10 Meters**

While 10 meters has not been the hottest band in the Amateur Radio toolkit of late, Iran apparently has found it an ideal spot to operate various radars. The interference was audible in International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 (IARU R1) and perhaps elsewhere in the world.

“Iranian radars were very active on our 10-meter band every day [in May],” reported IARU Monitoring System (IARUMS) Coordinator for Region 1 Wolf Hadel, DK2OM, in the IARUMS newsletter. “On 28.860 MHz, we could daily receive the strong and long-lasting signals. Other frequencies were used in [frequency hopping] mode.”

The list of additional Amateur Radio intruders on 10 meters included — or in some cases, no longer included — some of the usual suspects. Hadel reported that FM signals from Russian taxi dispatchers, driftnet fishery buoys, and Citizens Band “abusers” in Brazil have been operating on various 10-meter frequencies, “as usual.”

Meanwhile, some chronic intruding signals have disappeared. Among the missing is the 14,295 kHz harmonic from Radio Tajik on 4,765 kHz. Radio Hargeysa in Somaliland on 7,120 kHz is said to have been off the air for several weeks due to a transmitter failure. "We did not miss the transmissions," quipped Hadel, who also expressed the hope that the broadcast battle between Radio Eritrea and Radio Ethiopia on 40 meters may now be at an end. For some time now, Radio Eritrea contended with Ethiopian "white noise" interference on 7,140 and 7,180 kHz. This month, Ethiopia announced that it would accept a peace deal with Eritrea to end a bloody 20-year-old dispute.

Hadel reported a "hybrid modem" signal for a few days in May on 14.000 MHz from the Israeli Navy, consisting of six pre-carriers — PSK4 parallel and MIL-188-110A modified. Just below 20 meters, on 13.998.0 MHz, transmissions of MFSK-16 from Russia were observed on May 31. The signal was heard up to 14.001.165 MHz in the amateur band.

..... *ARRL NEWS June 2018*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Sailor Grateful for Maritime Mobile Service Network Assistance**

Phoenix sailor and radio amateur Timothy Henning, KE7WMZ, has expressed his gratitude to the Maritime Mobile Service Network (MMSN) for intercepting and handling his distress call on 14.300 MHz. Net control operator Harry Williams, W0LS, caught Henning's call requesting assistance with an urgent medical condition on May 23. Henning, some 200 nautical miles south of Ensenada, Mexico, in his sailing vessel *Victory Cat*, reported that a severe vision problem had developed in his right eye, and he was seeking immediate medical attention and advice.

Williams contacted the US Coast Guard in Alameda, California, relaying all information concerning the medical problem and staying on the air with KE7WMZ for several hours. The Coast Guard, in turn, relayed the information to the on-duty flight surgeon who advised that Henning seek immediate medical attention at the closest port of call.

It was decided that Henning would continue on to Ensenada, and the Coast Guard arranged to have someone meet him there and transport him to the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, while his wife stood by with the vessel at the dock.

Ultimately, it was determined that Henning had a detached retina, and he was transported to Phoenix for surgery.

"I appreciate, beyond words, that the Maritime Net was able to help us get in contact with the USCG and simply be at the other end of the HF radio, helping us through a challenging time," Henning told the MMSN afterward. "I especially want to thank Harry, W0LS. He was extremely professional and invaluable in linking us effectively with the USCG. We were just completing our 10 years round-the-world sail voyage."

The Maritime Mobile Service Net operates daily on 14.300 MHz from 1700 UTC to 0200 UTC. It is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. .... *ARRL NEWS June 2018*

# What is ARRL Field Day?

ARRL Field Day is the single most popular on-the-air event held annually in the US and Canada. On the fourth weekend of June of each year, more than 35,000 radio amateurs gather with their clubs, groups or simply with friends to operate from remote locations.

Field Day is a picnic, a campout, practice for emergencies, an informal contest and, most of all, FUN!

It is a time where many aspects of Amateur Radio come together to highlight our many roles. While some will treat it as a contest, other groups use the opportunity to practice their emergency response capabilities. It is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate Amateur Radio to the organizations that Amateur Radio might serve in an emergency, as well as the general public. For many clubs, ARRL Field Day is one of the highlights of their annual calendar.

The contest part is simply to contact as many other stations as possible and to learn to operate our radio gear in abnormal situations and less than optimal conditions.

We use these same skills when we help with events such as marathons and bike-a-thons; fund-raisers such as walk-a-thons; celebrations such as parades; and exhibits at fairs, malls and museums — these are all large, preplanned, non-emergency activities.

But despite the development of very complex, modern communications systems — or maybe because they ARE so complex — ham radio has been called into action again and again to provide communications in crises when it really matters. Amateur Radio people (also called “hams”) are well known for our communications support in real disaster and post-disaster situations.

## What is the ARRL?

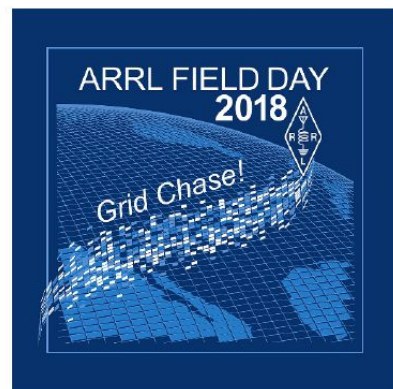
The American Radio Relay League is the national association for Amateur Radio in the USA, representing over 170,000 FCC-licensed Amateurs. The ARRL is the primary source of information about what is going on in ham radio. It provides books, news, support and information for individuals and clubs, special events, continuing education classes and other benefits for its members.

## What is Amateur Radio

Often called “ham radio,” the Amateur Radio Service has been around for a century. In that time, it’s grown into a worldwide community of licensed operators using the airwaves with every conceivable means of communications technology. Its people range in age from youngsters to grandparents. Even rocket scientists and a rock star or two are in the ham ranks. Most, however, are just normal folks like you and me who enjoy learning and being able to transmit voice, data and pictures through the air to unusual places, both near and far, without depending on commercial systems.

The Amateur Radio frequencies are the last remaining place in the usable radio spectrum where you as an individual can develop and experiment with wireless communications. Hams not only can make and modify their equipment, but can create whole new ways to do things.

**For More Information visit: [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)**



Updated: 2/2018



## UP – COMING ACTIVITIES AND HAMFESTS

**06/09/2018** – WRTFD Strawberry Festival

**06/16/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**07/21/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**08/18/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**09/15/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**10/20/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**11/17/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

**12/15/2018** – 0800 MARC Monthly meeting at the Johnson County REMC.  
Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

## CLUB DUES FOR 2018

**It** is that time of year to pay your dues for the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club.

The dues are still \$18.00 and they have remained that amount for many years.  
This also a good time to update any of your information for club records such as licence  
upgrade, change of address or call sign.

This is also a good opportunity for new amateurs to join our club and be part of  
our club activities.

Please see Ron, K9THR or Jacki, KI6QOG  
*M.A.R.C. Treasurer*

# MID-SATE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month at the Johnson County REMC 750 International Drive Franklin, IN 46131.

See our website, [www.midstatehams.org](http://www.midstatehams.org), for maps on how to get to our meeting.

Everyone is welcome; you do not have to be a *HAM* to attend our meetings or a member of the club.

**WA9RDF Repeater:**

146.835/  
146.235 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**Club Officers:**

President: Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG  
Vice President: Ron Schuetz -K9THR  
Secretary: Rhonda Curtis – WS9H  
Treasurer: Ron Scheutz – K9THR /  
Jacki Frederick – KI6QOG  
Repeater Trustee - Chris Frederick – KQ9Y

**WA9RDF Repeater:**

443.525/  
448.525 MHz  
(151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**Weekly Net: Sunday evening 7:00 PM ARES/RACES members and ALL RADIO AMATEURS**  
146.835/146.235 MHz (151.4 Hz PL Tone)

**The Official Newsletter of the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club**

P.O. Box 836  
Franklin, Indiana  
46131

**Spark Gap Editor: Robert LaGrange N9SIU**

*Please send your articles to my email: [n9siu@yahoo.com](mailto:n9siu@yahoo.com) no later than the 3rd of the month*



*Special thanks to Johnson County REMC for the use of their community room for meetings and testing.*